

Reflection

In my daily life do I make time for reflection? Perhaps at the end of the day, looking back to see what has happened, where God has been in the day; perhaps at the end of the week, seeing what joys, sorrows, struggles and achievements I can bring to join with Jesus' offering of his life, in the offering of the sacrifice of the Mass.

How do I try to hear what the Church is saying about the things which are part of my life? Things particular to me, and things which are going on in the world more generally? Do I find time to read about the teaching of the Church? Do I find time for spiritual reading?

Prayer

Keep your Church alert in faith
to the signs of the times
and eager to accept the challenge
of the gospel.
Open our hearts
to the needs of all humanity,
so that sharing their grief and anguish,
their joy and hope,
we may faithfully bring them the
good news of salvation
and advance together on the way to
your kingdom.

Why don't you?

- Find time each week to reflect on the Sunday readings. Start with the Gospel — in the days before each Sunday give time to read the passage quietly and see what words and phrases speak to you.
- In each day's news find something or someone to pray for.

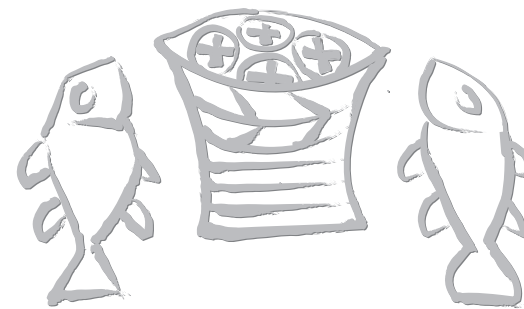
**Liturgy
Office**

**ENGLAND
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This leaflet is one a series of resources produced by the Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to assist parishes reflect on their celebration of the Eucharist in the light of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. Excerpt from *EPVN* ©1994; GIRM © 2004 ICEL, Inc. All rights reserved. Leaflet & *Celebrating the Mass* © 2005 Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales
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C013

In Communion with Christ 3. Word



The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

For in the readings, as explained by the Homily, God speaks to his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation, and offering them spiritual nourishment; and Christ himself is present in the midst of the faithful through his word.

*Christ is present
through his word*

By their silence and singing the people make God's word their own, and they also affirm their adherence to it by means of the Profession of Faith. Finally, having been nourished by it, they pour out their petitions in the Prayer of the Faithful for the needs of the entire Church and for the salvation of the whole world.

[GIRM 55]

Looking at the Mass

Introductory Rites

Liturgy of the Word

Reading
Responsorial Psalm
Reading
Gospel Acclamation
Gospel
Homily
Profession of Faith
Prayer of the Faithful

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Concluding Rite

When we hear the scriptures proclaimed in the liturgy Christ speaks to us. If we are ready to listen Christ meets us in his word.

The readings from Sacred Scripture and the chants between the readings form the main part of the Liturgy of the Word. The Homily, Profession of Faith, and Prayer of the Faithful expand and complete this part of the Mass.

In the Scriptures the community of faith even now hears God speaking to it. For this reason the biblical readings and their accompanying Scripture chants may not be omitted, shortened, or replaced by non-biblical texts.

The high point of the Liturgy of the Word is the proclamation of the Gospel reading. The other readings in their established sequence from the Old and New Testaments prepare the assembly for this proclamation.

In Communion with Christ

When the scriptures are read the Lord speak with his people. But the Lord speaks so that we might hear. Not just with our ears, but with our hearts and minds too. And he speaks that we might be drawn into conversation with him.

Does he offer us consolation or encouragement? If so, it would be ungracious not to thank the Lord. Have his words challenged or upset us? Then let us open our hearts and express our confusion,

The Lord is passionately interested in us

doubt, fear. It helps to talk! Such conversation makes demands on us. The Lord is not so much interested in abstract ideas, but is passionately interested in us, in all the particularity of our lives – in how and who we really are.

Our taking part in this sort of conversation, sparked off by listening to the Lord in the scriptures is good training for our attempt to listen to the Lord as he speaks to us through the events of daily life, of our own lives and those around us.

It would be a mistake to think the Lord speaks only through the words of scrip-

ture, long-since set down; or only in the context of our liturgy. These are places where we know he is speaking, and where it is sometimes easier to listen to him. But he speaks everywhere, in and through all the things that are taking place. We who have learnt to know his voice, have a special responsibility in this matter. As well as trying to listen to the Lord ourselves we are invited to share in the prophetic vocation of the whole Church – we who listen are asked to speak in love what we have heard. We are called to be witnesses to the truth that will lead all humankind to the fullness of life.

God speaks everywhere, in and through all things

The psalms have been used to give prayerful expression to the faith and feelings of God's people over the centuries. They were used by Christ himself in prayer. In these words of wonder and praise, repentance and sorrow, hope and trust, or joy and exultation the Church now responds to God's word. The psalms in the Lectionary have been selected to help the assembly to meditate on and respond to the word that has just been proclaimed.

The Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation is an acclamation by which the assembly of the faithful welcomes and greets in song the Lord who is about to speak to them in the Gospel, and by which they express their faith.

Enlightened and moved by God's word, the assembly exercises its priestly function by interceding for all humanity. Because "the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of the people of this age and especially of the poor and those suffering in any way are the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of Christ's disciples," the Church prays not just for its own needs but for the salvation of the world, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by any burden, and for the local community, particularly those who are sick or who have died.

Celebrating the Mass 153–171